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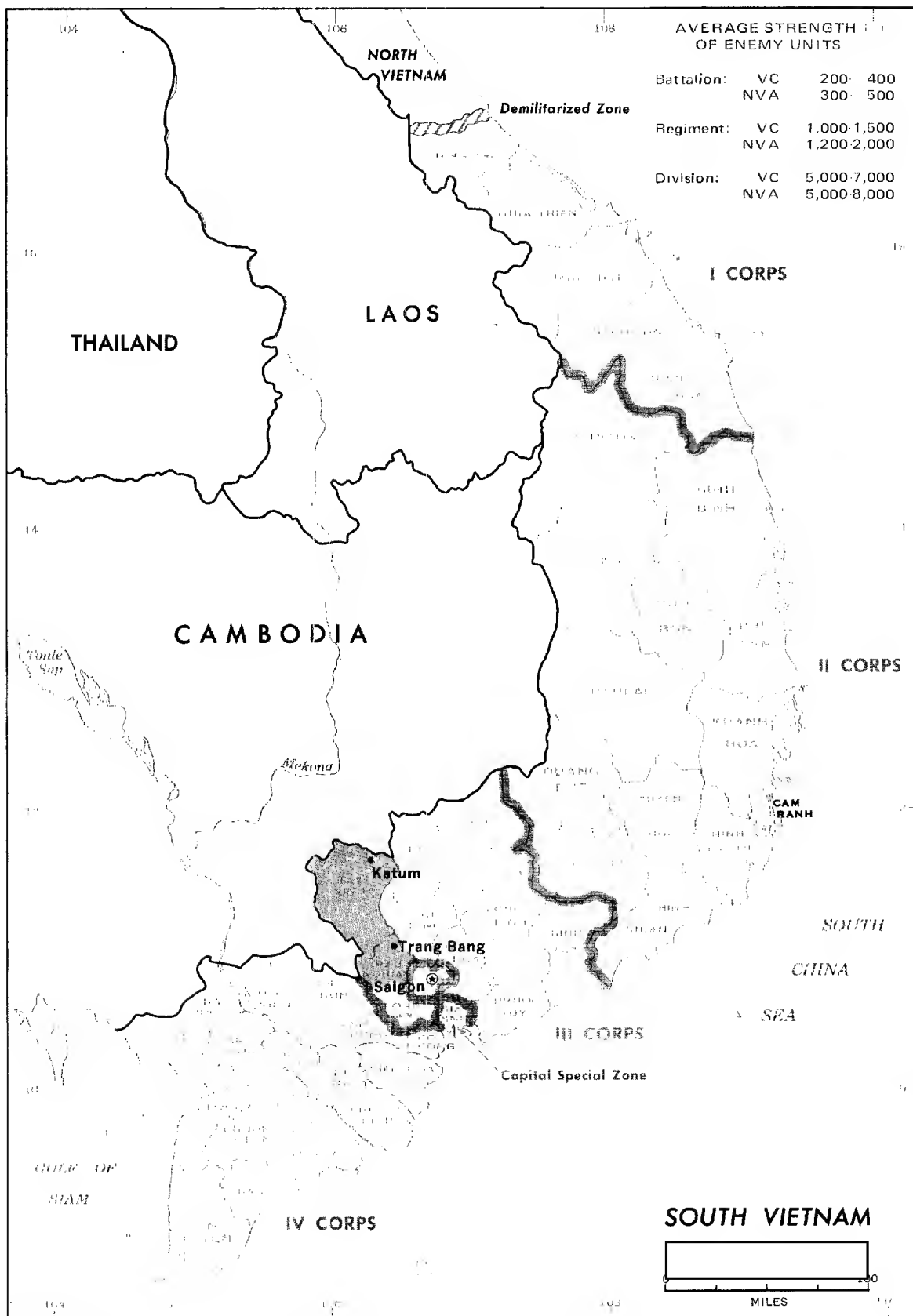
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【South Vietnam: Ground contact between allied and Communist troops remained light and scattered throughout most of South Vietnam on 4-5 May.

The most significant enemy-initiated action took place on 5 May near Katum in Tay Ninh Province where a US Army rifle company was attacked. In repulsing the attack, 100 enemy were killed with US losses of nine killed and 59 wounded. In addition, a rocket attack caused moderate damage to an ammunition supply facility.

Near Tran Bang in Hau Nghia Province a US Army resupply convoy was ambushed on 5 May. The attackers were repelled after an hour-long battle that accounted for 11 enemy dead and American losses of one killed and four wounded. [REDACTED]

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France: Confidential polls conducted late last week show Gaullist Georges Pompidou with a wide popular lead over any single opposition candidate for the presidency.

In the first testing of French public opinion since the Gaullists closed ranks behind Pompidou, 44 percent said that they would vote for the former prime minister. The combined opposition to Pompidou also received a total of 44 percent, but it was divided among four different political leaders. Twelve percent remained undecided.

Over the weekend, moderate leftist Gaston Defferre's position improved. The Socialist Party, the largest non-Communist formation on the left of the political spectrum, endorsed Defferre. Two of Defferre's rivals on the left, Francois Mitterrand and Alain Savary, announced that they would not run.

In addition, interim President Poher edged still further away from entering the race. He reportedly indicated in a letter to the head of the Socialist Party that his candidacy was "virtually impossible" with Defferre in the running. Defferre, who has advocated a Socialist rapprochement with the center since 1965, might thus pick up some portion of the roughly 12 to 15 percent of the electorate that usually votes for the center.

Defferre's most pressing problem is his relationship with the Communist Party. He cannot hope to win without Communist support on the second ballot, but is reluctant to court the Communists because of conviction--he has a consistent anti-Communist record--and because any such action would alienate the centrists.

The Communist Party itself, which found none of the democratic left candidates acceptable, has

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decided to put forward its own man--old-line Stalinist Jacques Duclos, who is widely known in France. In parliamentary elections the Communists usually capture about 20 percent of the vote, but their voting strength in a nationwide presidential election has never been tested. In 1965, in the first popular presidential election since the party was founded, the Communists supported Mitterrand on both ballots. [REDACTED]

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Peru: The military government is moving toward another crackdown on opposition.

The government's "moralization" campaign has been renewed in recent weeks; it has concentrated on pinning charges of corruption on many officials of the Belaunde administration and even on dissident members of the current government. The overall aim of this campaign, which is led by Minister of the Interior Artola, appears to be to discredit completely Peru's established political processes.

Last week, Artola denounced the country's municipal governments and leaders as "incompetent" and announced that municipal elections scheduled for later this year had been postponed. Such actions have stirred an outcry in the Peruvian press,

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Costa Rica - Panama: Conciliatory efforts in Washington and Central America appear to have eased the immediate threat of a crisis over border violations.

Costa Rica is still talking to officials of the Organization of American States (OAS), but on an informal basis. The OAS council chairman has suggested that if his group is asked to deal with the issue it should be handled in the Inter-American Peace Committee, where proceedings are private and confidential. Meanwhile, the foreign minister of El Salvador has traveled to San Jose and Panama City in an attempt to mediate.

Costa Rica's border with Panama has been quiet since the clash on 30 April, but security units on both sides have been reinforced. There is no information yet to indicate whether Costa Rica will try to buy arms elsewhere now that the US has turned down its request.

Panama continues to deny that its security forces crossed the border last week [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The censored news media in Panama have given no coverage to the border affair.

[REDACTED]

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India: Revolution-minded defectors from the Communist Party of India/Marxist have formed a pro-Peking Communist party, thus formalizing another split in India's Communist movement.

The new Communist Party of India/Marxist-Leninist castigates both the independent Communist Party of India/Marxist and the Soviet-lining Communist Party of India for their policies of trying to achieve power within India's constitutional system.

The new party advocates immediate revolution in the countryside and will try to revive rural efforts launched sporadically but ineffectually by individual extremist groups since 1967. Extremists were previously joined loosely in an all-India coordinating committee, but the committee had been unable to provide cohesion for the disparate groups, which proliferated even within individual states.

Jealousies among different state groups as well as ideological hairsplitting will hurt the new party, and these factors foreclose the possibility of serious and coordinated nationwide rural agitation. Formation of a national party may give a boost to West Bengal extremists, however, who are attempting to undermine the state's Marxist-Communist - led United Front government. Extremist-provoked violence in Calcutta has already alarmed state authorities.

As a leftist government, West Bengal hopes to avoid the use of state police to put down a "popular" threat to law and order, but it cannot afford widespread disruption, which helped cause the fall of the first Marxist-Communist - led government in 1967.

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NOTE

India: Selecting a Congress Party candidate to run for president to succeed the late Zakir Husain appears likely to place added strains on party unity. The election must be held within six months. Prime Minister Gandhi is expected to press for a candidate who, like Husain, will support her in disagreements within the party. Because of the inherent, although largely untested, powers of the presidency, the choice of a new president to a full five-year term could also have significant impact on the composition of future Indian governments if Congress fails to win a majority in the national parliamentary elections scheduled for 1972. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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